

## 7 Actions That Drive Consistent High Performance

Companies are always looking for ways to improve performance. These talent management best practices can not only drive continuous high performance, they'll also go a long way toward building a high performance culture.

1. Review and adapt. The integration of strategy, organization, and talent should be routinely reviewed and adapted with the Board, and during quarterly business reviews. It may need to be done even more often if the pace or scale of change warrants.
2. Focus intensely on building critical capabilities. Identifying, measuring, and narrowing critical capability gaps drives consistent high performance.
3. Remove obstacles. Identify and fix situations where high potentials are blocked in their advancement. Blockers are employees who have occupied a position for a long time and who are not likely to advance. This places limitations on the number of developmental jobs available. There may be circumstances that justify temporarily leaving a Blocker in place.
4. Prime the pump. It isn't a natural impulse for most leaders to give up their top talent, especially if they don't have a ready successor. Recognize and reward leaders who let go of high potentials at the right time, and who develop and export top talent consistently.
5. Invest disproportionately. Invest more time, money and other resources on individuals who create the most value.

6. Apply rigor to identify, calibrate, and accelerate development of high potentials. Expose high potentials to a mix of assignments and experiences that give them a big picture view, the latitude to contribute innovative ideas, and a heavy dose of interaction with company executives and board members.



7. Ask the right questions often. Make a habit of asking questions like the ones below at talent reviews, staff meetings, executive offsites, board meetings, town halls, training events, exit interviews, etc. Doing so will reinforce your commitment to talent management and you'll also gather actionable data and insights that help you to accurately diagnose and take actions that will drive consistent high performance.

- Will we have the talent we need for success in two years? Five years? Beyond?
- Why do people join our organization? Stay? Leave?
- What is our Culture? Does it fit with what we say it is?
- Are our best leaders in the most critical jobs?
- Do we have enough backups and pipeline for our critical positions? Top talent?
- Are solid retention plans in place for our top talent?

You're probably doing some of these things already, but consider trying the ones that you aren't doing currently.

~ David Jardin, CPA



Alliance for Manufacturing & Technology

## HOW WE HELP

- Business Assessments
- Strategic Planning
- Lean Enterprise
- Supervisory Training (TWI)
- ISO/AS Quality Systems
- Sales and Marketing
- New Opportunity Identification and Growth — Markets, Products, Services, Customers

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MEP • MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP



Empire State Development  
Division of Science, Technology & Innovation

# Five Ways to Stimulate Creativity and Innovation

1. Use interestingness as a design probe.

“You can’t fake interestingness.” Lead with it, and the rest will follow. If something is interesting, it doesn’t need an explanation, in the same way that you can’t make someone have fun. People will be drawn to it naturally.

2. Take a technology in search of a product, use the tools you have and apply something new to it.

Sometimes the best way to make a pizza, is not to start with dough and tomatoes, but with a \$20 note and a phone.

3. The space in between silly and serious is incredibly important.

Take existing elements and combine them in new ways to make a combination of systems.

Very often, combining things is making or creating too. An awareness of combining systems for reinvention rather than simply replacing them is key in today’s society.

Instead of reinventing an entire system, sometimes all you need is to fix the one part that houses a slew of problems. “The funny thing about institutions is that they prefer to start doing things than stop doing things that no longer work.”

Get into the habit of stopping what’s not working as being critical to moving forward. “Quite often times, it’s not filling the balloon with helium, but cutting off the sandbags, that gets you aloft”



4. Design your creative space to reward serendipity (in public).

Allow for a “freeing up of space”. Expand people’s ideas of what constitutes raw materials. The physical space of the design is a raw material — be it the walls or the floors. Organize your work-space so that you can come up with ideas together.

5. Contradict everything put forward about creativity.

The problem with the conversation around creativity is that it’s presented as a single formula that will work for anyone.

~ Clay Shirky

# Essential Enablers for Business Growth

Why is it that some companies are birthed and grow very quickly and successfully, seemingly overnight, while other organizations either putter along or slowly die? There are certain fundamental things that enable the growth of organizations and often it is not an obvious thing.

## So what are some things that can enable the growth of an organization?

- **Having a Clear Vision**

This might seem obvious to some but it is not an uncommon thing for organizations to get so busy with the day-to-day that they lose sight of who they are and what it is they are trying to accomplish. Having a well written vision statement that is displayed throughout the organization is one way to help keep that focus.

- **Having a Strategy to Achieve the Vision**

Planning is one of those exercises that people either love or hate to do. But a well thought out and written strategic plan is imperative for organizations who are trying to move forward. Strategic planning processes are intended to stop the organization for a time and really think through where they are and where it is they are trying to go. It also helps keep the organization from veering off into areas that may not line up with the vision.

- **Staying Current with Changing Trends and Technology**

Business trends and technology are changing so quickly that organizations who don't make it a business priority to learn current trends will soon find themselves at a disadvantage.

This can be overwhelming, and somewhat of a whirlwind, but creating a process to learn and stay current is critical to long term success.

- **Having Goals**

Writing and implementing business goals is the practical side to achieving vision through strategy. Mapping out a plan on how to take the steps to get to where the organization wants to go is critical to goal attainment. Taking those goals down to the employee level is the next step of the process. Employee goals should be standard for all levels of the organization so employees can see how what they do affects achieving the organization's vision.

- **Understanding Who Their Customers Are and What They Want**

It is amazing the number of organizations out there who are in business and don't have a good grasp on who their customers are and what their customers want from them. All organizations should have a process in place to gain customer perspective from customer comment cards or customer satisfaction surveys, and to take that feedback and turn it into improvement plans.

- **Taking Care of Their Employees**

Employees are the ones who do the work and interact with the customers. Organizations need to take care of their employees and give them the necessary resources to do their job. Assessing the environment from the employee's perspective through employee satisfaction surveys and incorporating employee feedback into planning is another critical step

organizations should take.

- **Having a Good Performance Management Process**

Successful organizations have learned the value and importance of good performance management. Employees need to have a good understanding of what is expected of them and how they are accountable for those expectations. Good communication and coaching can help with developmental opportunities for employees and may also identify those employees who may not be the right fit for the organization. Structured communication processes are important and can minimize post-employment litigation if done appropriately.

- **Managing Resources**

Budgeting and managing business resources is critical to the long-term health of an organization. Taking risks and leveraging assets can quickly turn to disaster as we've seen over the last couple of years. Having a consistent budgeting process that lines up with corporate objectives that is managed appropriately is critical. Keeping a watchful eye for employee fraud and data theft is also important in overall business asset management.

- **Having Fun**

If we are all in this for the long haul, we need to enjoy what we are doing. Doing things intentionally to make the work environment fun and helping employees manage a good work life balance can really contribute to the long-term health of an organization.

~ Thriving Small Business

# 25 Years of ISO 9000

March 15 marked the 25th anniversary of the ISO 9000 series standards. (If you've been around for a while, you know that British standard BS 5179 preceded the ISO standard and the U.S. Mil-Q-9858 predated the British standard.) So the notion of auditable quality system standards go back nearly 45 years, but the real impact certainly launched on a worldwide basis with the release and adoption of the ISO 9000 series standards. Since the standards were released in 1987, they have gone through three revisions: 1994, 2000, and 2008.

According to the International Organization for Standardization, as of 2009, the total number of organizations certified to ISO 9000 exceeded one million!

Much applause and appreciation goes to the volunteers on the U.S. TAG to ISO/TC 176 (the group that writes and revises the ISO 9000 series for the U.S., which is administered by ASQ), and to the other national committees that contribute to the development of ISO 9000. These committees, as well as the many thought leaders who have served the community with their vision, knowledge, experience, and practiced wisdom have made ISO 9000 perhaps the most notable quality development of the late 20th century.

Here's to the first 25 years with hope of even greater realized impact in the next 25!

## At What Stage is Your Small Business Growth?

1. Existence
2. Survival
3. Success
4. Rapid Growth
5. Maturity

### **Existence:**

*Goal: Get monthly cash flow to the point of consistent breakeven.*

Some might think this is the startup stage of a company. But in fact, there are many businesses that have existed for years and still cannot breakeven month to month. Businesses at this stage need better owner maturity, company systems, or both to create consistent monthly cash flow.

### **Survival:**

*Goal: Consistently achieve owner established profit requirements.*

The shift at this stage is to profitability. You have invested time and money into your business at this stage. Now you need to begin getting a return on investment (ROI). That means going beyond just making enough to keep the doors open. You must begin creating systems in your business that consistently generate profits. Your level of business knowledge needs to increase or the business will stagnate.

### **Success:**

*Goal: One of two possible choices exists. It is based on the owner's desire – grow or just sustain the business' success created to this point.*

This is a key turning point for the business, mired between success and survival.

Many owners are in survival mode but believe they've created success. The business consistently generates profits, but the OWNER does it, not systems which is a critical difference survival and success. In a success stage, the business owner can disengage from the business and it will continue consistently generating a profit. This ability is what gives a business real value. Without it the owner has just created a job for themselves. It will difficult, if not impossible, for them to sell their business in this condition.

### **Rapid Growth:**

*Goal: To effectively manage finances to assure growth does not outpace the financial resources.*

This stage is based on an owner's goal to grow the business set in the success stage. In the rapid growth stage large sums of capital are needed as the business takes on more and more customers requiring more equipment and materials. Also, the number of employees to service these new customers seems ever expanding. Properly executed it is in this stage that a small business becomes big company. If not managed properly, this stage can be the death of a company.

### **Maturity:**

*Goal: To diversify into other markets or find related products to sell to the exiting customer base.*

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# At What Stage is Your Small Business Growth?

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The characteristics of this stage are big and lethargic. The company has again reached a plateau. It has saturated its market or outgrown its management teams' ability to manage its growth. Companies in this stage often cannot react to major shifts in the market and die as a result. But, well managed companies in this stage begin to diversify in ways that allow the company to continue to grow. They

accomplish this by moving into other markets or finding related products for their existing customer base. These other initiatives are really other entities in earlier stages in the growth cycle. So you see different parts of the company and different stages of the growth model.

## At What Stage is Your Small Business Growth?

So, based on what you've read here at what stage are you and your small business growth? It's time to take a hard look in

the mirror and ask if you are serious about growing your business, maybe you need to grow yourself first? Remember, the success formula – personal growth, business leadership, life success.

What has been your experience? At what stage of growth is your company? Why do you believe it is at this stage? How do you plan to move forward?

~ Dino Eliadis de,inc.

**"IT'S TIME TO LET ALL THE PEOPLE THAT YOU KNOW, including the people in your business, that manufacturing is cool. What we do is really cool. We don't think about it because we live and breathe it every day. But start getting your neighbors, your teachers, your political leaders, your government officials, your county officials into your facilities and show them how much you contribute to the economy. Show them how important manufacturing is not only to your community but to the county, the state and the federal government. It's time to reeducate the people that what we do matters, in a big way."**

~ Grady Cope, chairman of the National Tooling and Machining Association, Feb 14th at the North American Manufacturing and Invention Expo in Cleveland

## Around the Southern Tier

May 01	Conversation with Congressman Tom Reed ~ Chemung County Chamber ~ 607-734-5137
May 03	Small Business Training Part 1 ~ SBDC at Binghamton University ~ 607-777-4024
May 10	SBC Network Luncheon ~ Greater Binghamton Chamber ~ 607-772-8860
May 10	Small Business Training Part 2 ~ SBDC at Binghamton University ~ 607-777-4024
May 16	After Hours Mixer ~ Watkins Glen Area Chamber ~ 607-535-4300
May 17	Small Business Training Part 3 ~ SBDC at Binghamton University ~ 607-777-4024
May 22	Next-Generation Materials Characterization ~ CCMR ~ <a href="http://www.ccmr.cornell.edu/symposium">www.ccmr.cornell.edu/symposium</a>
May 31	The State of the Human Resources ~ Tompkins County Chamber ~ 607-273-7080
June 05	Made in Chemung County ~ Chemung County Chamber ~ 607-734-5137

Please add [mailbot@amt-mep.org](mailto:mailbot@amt-mep.org) to your address book or safe list to receive AM&T e-News. To subscribe to electronic or paper versions of our newsletter or to update your mailing address visit: [www.amt-mep.org](http://www.amt-mep.org) then select News and Events from the menu.



Alliance for Manufacturing & Technology

## BENEFITS OF BECOMING AN AM&T ASSOCIATE

- Four free hours of consulting services
- Your company's profile will be featured in the "Associates' Corner" of our monthly newsletter, which is distributed throughout eight counties: Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tompkins, and Tioga. Also, the newsletter is featured on our website giving your company worldwide exposure
- Discounted fees at AM&T sponsored seminars & workshops
- A free Performance Benchmark and Transformation Planner (\$2,500 value)
- A link to your company's website from ours
- Assistance with Technology Transfer, Funding Sources, Venture Capital Investment, Networking, Research & Development Programs, etc

Call Jim Cunningham at 607-725-1225 to ask about becoming an associate.

More information at [www.amt-mep.org](http://www.amt-mep.org)

## Associates' Corner



SEPAC, Inc. has been designing and manufacturing electromagnetic clutches and brakes for the industrial, medical, military and aerospace markets since 1984. SEPAC's products include an extensive line of tooth, multi-disc and single surface type designs.

Located in a 25,000 square foot facility at 1580 Lake Street in Elmira, NY, the 30 full-time employees use state-of-the-art equipment and design/business software to continually improve and steadily grow their business.

In addition to its pre-engineered standard

products, SEPAC has set itself apart from their competitors by designing custom solutions to customer's exact and often very demanding needs.

SEPAC is compliant to AS 9100-2000 to better serve the military, aerospace and energy markets.

The company's latest offering is a full on-line catalog with 3D solid models available for download. This lets the design engineer quickly insert an available product into his project, saving time for both SEPAC and the customer, while reducing costly mistakes and redesigns.

For more information, visit: [www.sepac.com](http://www.sepac.com)



Hardinge is a global designer, manufacturer and distributor of machine tools, specializing in SUPER PRECISION(TM) and precision CNC lathes, high performance Machining Centers, high-end cylindrical and jig Grinding Machines, and technologically advanced Workholding & Rotary Products.

Hardinge's products are distributed to most of the industrialized markets around the world with approximately 70% of the 2009 sales outside of North America. Hardinge has a very diverse international customer base and serves a wide variety of end-user markets. This customer base includes metalworking manufacturers which make parts for a variety of industries, as well

as a wide range of end users in the aerospace, agricultural, transportation, basic consumer goods, communications and electronics, construction, defense, energy, pharmaceutical and medical equipment, and recreation industries, among others.

Hardinge has manufacturing operations in the United States, Switzerland, Taiwan, and China.

Hardinge utilizes the Lean Principles in Manufacturing, Six Sigma and Total Quality Management for continuous improvement activities throughout its operations. Hardinge is ISO 9001 certified, a former Baldrige finalist and one of the Top 50 Companies in America.

For more information, visit: [www.hardinge.com](http://www.hardinge.com)

# Supervisor Training

(Abbreviated version of the 30 hour course)

This workshop focuses on the basics of how to

- More effectively lead employees,
- Maintain a productive work environment, and
- Foster good employee relations.

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## Are You?

- new to the supervisor role?
- having trouble supervising others?
- not getting the most from your employees?

## What will be covered?

- Delivering constructive feedback
- Giving credit when due
- Discussing changes with employees prior to implementation
- Making best use of each person's ability
- Earning employees' cooperation and respect

## Participants will also learn how to deal with employee problems by

- Getting the facts
- Weighing those facts
- Making the decision
- Taking Action
- Checking results

## Who Should Attend?

Anyone with direct reports, or anyone who directs the work of others, whether new to the position or in need of a refresher.

**Date:** Thursday, June 28, 2012

**Time:** Session A: 8:00 am to 12:00 pm  
sign-in and continental breakfast at 7:30  
Session B: 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm  
sign-in and snack at 12:30

**Location:** Treadway in Owego, NY

**Cost:** \$125 (\$75 for AM&T Associates)

**Instructor:** Lloyd Johnson, TWI Certified Trainer

**Registration Deadline is Thursday, June 21, 2012**

To register on-line visit  
[www.amt-mep.org](http://www.amt-mep.org)  
or contact Kathy Peacock at  
607-774-0022 x308

For more information contact Lloyd Johnson  
[ljohnson@amt-mep.org](mailto:ljohnson@amt-mep.org)  
607-227-6229

**Register Soon**  
Class Fills Quickly

Return Service Requested

**AM&T  
DIRECTORY**

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**HELPING MANUFACTURERS PLAN, PERFORM, PROFIT & GROW**

We are a team of experienced, skilled consultants and trainers dedicated to helping manufacturers in the Southern Tier of NY plan, perform, profit & grow. Our goal is to have manufacturers remain, grow and prosper in the Southern Tier.

AM&T uses a comprehensive, overall business approach to create significant and long-lasting business improvements. Our experience is that individual improvement methodologies will provide some measurable benefits on their own, but it is the combination of them across the whole value chain that will lead to dramatic gains.

**WE CAN HELP YOU:**

- Assess your current state
- Articulate and define the desired future state
- Train your workforce in improvement methodologies
- Implement process improvements across the whole value chain
- Identify new opportunities
- Achieve and sustain growth and breakaway results

**AM&T DELIVERS:**

A third-party survey for 2005-2011 reported:

- 2,956 jobs created or retained
- \$608 million in increased or retained sales
- \$17.1 million in cost savings
- 137:1 return on investment
- \$818 million total impact
- 4.7 out of 5.0 Customer Satisfaction

**OUR SKILLS:**

- Business Assessments
- Strategic Planning
- Lean Enterprise
- Supervisory Training (TWI)
- ISO/AS Quality Systems
- Sales and Marketing
- New Opportunity Identification and Growth — Markets, Products, Services, Customers

Our integrated, comprehensive approach, applied to the whole value chain, can make a difference. We are "hands-on", roll-up-your-sleeves people and we're passionate about manufacturing.

**Call Jim Cunningham at 607-725-1225 to ask how we can help.**